

LOVES COVRT

O F CONSCIENCE,

Written upon two severall Occasions,
with new Lessons for Lovers.

Wherunto is annexed a kinde Husband's
advice to his Wife.

By *Humfrey Crowch.*

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79 Art
(5)



L O N D O N.

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LOVES COURT

OF

CONSCIENCE

And how it liveth in the Heart of Man
With the Fellowship of Love

By the Honorable
John Donne
M.A.



Printed by J. Streater, at the Sign of the Hand and Ball, in the Strand, 1633.



Loves Court of Conscience,

*Wherin doth sit Reason, Discretion,
Grace, Truth, and Wit.*

The Cryer of the Court.

Lovers stand by, and give your *Judges* place,
Reason, Discretion, Wisdom, Truth and Grace,
Which here is come your causes for to try,
Where *Justice* sits embracing equity.

Intelligence.

My Lords, here is a Lover newly slain,
Whose corpse within this coffin doth remain.
I come to give you notice that this Elf,
Unjustly wrong'd, unjustly hang'd himselfe.

Love's Cause of Conscience

A wretched woman was the cause of all,
His sad laments, and his untimely fall.

Grace speaks

I cannot see though she have murdered
How he can from the murder be excused.

Reason speaks

It is true my Lord, had he been ruled by me
From this *same bloody fact* he had been free

Truth speaks

And had the woman taken me for her guide,
The man had *liv'd*, and she had bin his bride

Wisdom speaks

And had they both my precepts well observ'd
From *Reason, Grace and Truth*, they had

Discretion speaks

And had they not *forgot* to mix with grace
Grace, Reason, Wisdom, Truth had it then plac'd
How divine *Wisdom* will of them dispose
We cannot say no man this *Secret* knows

Lovers Court of Conscience.

But cause that Lovers should not be so dotting,
He read some lessons to them worth noting.

Such who when their friends would part them



The first Lesson.

SVch whose hands with heart agree,
In true loves sweet sympathy,
Such whose loves and true affection,
Doth to others give direction,
How to love and love indeed
If in love they mean to speed,
Such that can no rivall brook,
Or suspicious of a look,
Or be angry for a kisse,
Or can wink at all a misse,
Such whose jealous friends can never
From their hearts true love dis sever,
Such who when they play and toy
Do not work themselves annoy,
Love fixt on each others hearts,
Not upon the outward parts,
Lest that when those parts decay,
Love with glory passe away,
Such that do not love to range,
Such that cannot brook a change,

Lower Court of Conscience

Such that with a roving eye,
Give no cause of jealousy,
Such who when their friends would part them,
Neither friends nor foes can part them,
Such who like the Camelopard,
Thrive and flourish all the while,
And the more they are oppress'd,
They the more in love are blest
Such as hate so foule a last
As to break a true contract,
Or a true contract to make
False when once they do forsake,
Love and friend, and honestie,
In the twinkling of an eye;
Such as when contract they are,
Think a minute a whole year,
Till they do enjoy their mates,
Such shall live in happy states,
Such as nought but death can sever,
Happy be their fortunes ever:
This is love and worth commending,
Ever living never ending,
These to marry need not feare
Cause they honest minds do beare,
Whilst the rest that break their faith,
Live in fear of Heavens wrath.

The second Lesson.

THe Turtle Dove when she bath lost her mate,
Being expos'd to good or evill fate,
Refuses comfort and her mate being lost,
Matches no more her first love being crost,
Contrariwise made of another nature,
Do lose themselves contrary to this creature.
For when their Lovers constant do expect them,
Others do sue for love that do affect them, (them.
And steals away their hearts, wins them and weds
Vnknowne to their first Lovers, bords and beds
This is a hell, a torture to the minde, (them,
Of him that such discourtesie doth finde,
Offerd by her whose credit lyes a bleeding,
No good can come wher is such bad proceeding.
And such a Comedy most commonly,
Epds for the most part with a Tragedie,
Wofull experience manifestly proves,
The wofull ends of such false-hearted lovers,
This should teach men to have a speciall care,
Whom they affect, so whom they love do bear,
Since women are so fickle minded grown,
That when men think them sure they finde them
flown.

Lovers Court of Conscience.

Iust
A Sparrow
Goes home with mirth with melody & laughter,
And thinks to come again a fortnight after,
Then findes them gone, just so it is with men,
That sets their mindes on women now and then
But should they set a thousand watchfull eyes,
Over these winged birds these Butter-flies,
Twere all in vain if they intend to flie.
They'l have their wils in spite of thee and I,
As soon hedge in the Cuckow as constrain
A woman to be true so willfull vain,
But yet I pittie them in such a case,
That love such women so much void of grace,
Because I know the greater is the love,
If truly plac'd, the harder to remove.

The third Lesson.

CONCERNING contract twixt a couple now
Without their friends consent I nor allow,
But if the thing be done I cannot see,
Why friends should part friends that so well agree
To hurt the tender conscience of a maid,
Who ere thou art that shalt her so periwade,
To

Lovers Court of Conscience

To break her faith she plighted to her love,
Shall surely pay the price of her disobedience,
The gods will be revenged of thee, though they two part,
Nor is thee free from Heavens punishment
Though it be done without her friends consent,
For though rash vows in heat of loves affection,
Are better broken, than kept by wits direction,
Yet how can this the conscience justify,
Corrupted with the sin of perjury.
As for example I do vow a thing,
I vow performance this to passe to bring,
Which if I break, and say 'twas rashly done,
Will this excuse me from presumption?
Besides their words are very abrupt rash,
That would assigne that Lovers vows are rash,
That love is surely too too hot to last,
That at the first sight is so firmly plac'd,
To move a contract in two Lovers loze
To knie the knot after it undoe
Children and inconsiderate foole do use,
The bond undoe and themselves abuse,
But Lovers should be wiser and so wise,
Not to do any thing without advise,

Love Court of Conscience.



The fourth Lesson.

THe conscience being stretched, God offended,
The maid suborned and the man suspended,
Closely she marries, and he shall not know
The time when he receives his mortal blow,
She that neere thought to do him so much harme,
Now keeps anothers bed and besome warme,
And all upon perswasion of some friend:
Whose counsell proues as payson in the end,
The guilty conscience neuer taking rest,
But night and day the offender doth molest,
Strange apparitions sometimes doth appeare,
Vnto the party filling her with feare,
With strange Aspects she is perplext a nights,
In dreames and visions which she takes for spies,
Sometimes shee thinks she sees him whom shee
Wronged,
Comming to her with fiery burning tong,
To pull that t. ngue out that did falsifie,
A spotted faich with foulest purgery.
Sometimes she thinks men in white sheets she sees
Covered with white from head below the knees,

And

Love's Court of Conscience.

And then she thinks although the sight be faded,
How white her conscience was before 'twas stain'd?

And though between her husbands arms she rest,
The thought of her first love doth her molest,
Her conscience stings, her troubled heart doth

smite her,
And dreadful dreams doth night by night affright
her.



The fifth Lesson.

THe news being brought to the forsaken Lover,

As time will at the length all things discover,
His love so truly plac'd must be removed,
From her which heretofore so well he loved;
That which he did must be again undone,
The hardest taske that underneath the Sun,
A man afoone a mountain may displace,
As remove that his inward thoughts embrace,
Or say that he will straightway take in hand,
To separate the Ocean from the land,
For nature will be nature, sense be sense
And weaknesse unto both hath reference,

Poore

Love Court of Confidence.

Pebrman take Reason for maist be thy Bride,
And in this matter let her be thy guide
But O why do I talk of reason so,
Lovers have no such Bride nor none such know
For if they ruled were by her directions,
Then might they learn to rule their own affect-
I with distressed Lovers such a blisse (ons,
To understand and know what reason is,
But all in vain, love in another kinde,
By violence thrusts reason from the minde.
O god what paine doth this world bring to me,
Shew me the way how to rule this love
Or if it be a thing must govern us,
Why are we brought to this experience thus?
Pittie him O his friends in such a fit,
In whose behalf these lines of grief I writ,
And let his sufferings in a cause so right,
Be thought upon when he is out of sight,
Who being cross, himselfe engaged hath,
To crosse the Seas from her that broke her faith,
That being gone he might not see the shame,
Thats drawing on upon so false a Dame
Three yeares a faithfull friend to her he was
Three yeers contract before this came to passe,
And now a three yeers Voyage is he going,
And all because he will not see her ruine.
Maidens be faithfull, yongmen, he that can
Bridle affection, he's the wisest man.



The Sonet of *Dido* and *Eneas*.

After the Vertues they had playd their partes,
Errour came in to alter Lovers hearts.

Dido was a Carthage Queen,
That lov'd a Trojan Knight,
Which wandering many a Coast hee had seen,
And many a dreadful fight,
As they a hunting rode, a shewre
Drove them in plucklesse breaſts,
Into a darksome Caves,
Where *Eneas* with his charms,
Lockt Queen *Dido* in his arms,
And had what he did crave.

Dido Hymens rites forgot,
Her Love was wing'd with haſte,
Her honour ſhee conſider'd not,
But in her breaſt him plac'd:
And when her love was new begun,
Love ſent down his winged ſonne

Love's Court of Conscience.

To fright Aeneas sleeping,
Who had him by break of day
From Queen Dido's side away
Which made her fall a weeping.

Dido wept, but what of this?
The gods would have it so,
Aeneas nothing did amisse,
For he was fowle as you,
Learn Lovers thus to weep,
With false loves, but let them weep,
Tis folly to be true,
Let this lesson serve your turn,
And let sweet Didoes morn,
So you get daily new.

He or she that fancies wrong,
May be ruled by this Song.

Love's Contri of Conscience.

A kinde husbands advice to his wife.

MY love, my bosom friend, to whom I owe
My best respects, if you but this did know,
That your curll and unadvised words
Doth pierce my heart, like daggers, knives, and
darts,
The reason is, because I well respect you,
It would not be so, did not I affect you.
My Lord my God provides all needfull things,
As well for me as for the greatest Kings,
And under God I carefully provide
Meat for my children, and my wife beside.
If you or they for whom I pains do take,
Deny obedience, cause my estate is weak,
It is signe, small love to me you beare,
As by your disobedience may appeare:
For if you will not love me for my self,
You shall not love me, for I have no wealth.
If you on wealth so much did cast your eye,
Why did you marry one so poor as I?
I had small wealth when first with thee I married,
Nor do I wish that I unwed had tarried.

Since

Lutes Count of Conscience.

Since I am richer then I was before,
And who can justly say that I am poor?
Since God some children unto me hath given,
That may for ought I know, be Saints in heaven.
These are my riches and my chief content,
Glory to God that mee, such riches lent.
Many a rich man that goes fine and brave,
Would give a thousand pound one child to have.
Gold cannot get a child, O if it could,
Then rich men would have children made of gold.
If gold be counted riches, then have I
Many good things that gold can never buy.
Then I am richer far then some that have
Gold in their purses, lands and livings, braye.
Yet I enjoy these blessings but in vain,
Because I love, and am not lov'd again.
O would I did not love thee half so well,
I'de nere regard that firebrand of hell;
I mean your tongue that doth afflict my heart,
For if a stranger should but set thy part,
I would not care, I am of this belief,
Where is great love, the greater is the grief,
If that it be repuls'd by evill speeches,
By a curst dame that strives to weare the breeches.
Consider what I say, and be advis'd,
Silence in women kinde is highly pris'd.
How canst thou say thou lov'st me with thy heart,
Thy tongue doth shew thou lov'st me but in part.

Loves Course of Conscience.

It will be so, unless you rule your tongue,
That member that hath done me so much wrong.
Those women love their husbands well indeed,
That to their humours are so well agreed.
That though their husbands ne'r so cross appear,
They silent are, because they love them deare.
I do not wish I such a wife embrac't.
But wish that such a tongue in thee were plac't,
For such as they may have worse faults then thee
And such as they are sure no wives for me.
Onely I wish thee silent as they are,
And then none of them shall with thee compare,
So well I do esteem of thee sweet heart,
That nothing but thy tongue shall us two part:
Nor can I say that I in haste did chuse
One that good counsell scorn'd, and did refuse:
For I did never finde thee obstinate,
That I should think my words are out of date,
Or that I speak now out of time or place,
Vnto a woman wanting wit and grace:
For wit I know thou hast, and that is this,
To know what should be done, & what's amisse.
And if this wit with grace together joyn,
Thou art more dearer, and more neerer mine.
For though for wit we both may go to schoole,
Yet I do know thou art not such a foole,
But that this thing thou well dost understand,
That thou dost know what's under my command,

B

Vn-

Love's Court of Conscience.

Vnlesse you'l say, the Priest in vain did say,
That you must cherish honour, and obey;
Which if you do deny, you do herein
Against your conscience, & your knowledge sin
Should you do so, I think it not unfit,
To say that you have neither grace nor wit:
Which God forbid, for you have read I know,
That after God on man did life bestow,
He made the woman out of *Adams* side,
Not his commander, but his loving Bride.
It is not good that man should live alone,
This the Almighty said, this think upon.
So now you cannot chuse but understand,
Woman was made to comfort, not command.
They are sweet comforts both at bord and bed,
Alwayes provided they are not misled
By evill company, or by the tongue
To do their husbands & their neighbours wrong
But if their tongues like thunder trouble men,
They may be said to be Commanders then.
Sara obeyed *Abraham*, and did call
Him Lord and Master, mark this women all.
O times, how are you changed two poore men
Can hardly finde one *Sara* among ten.
A shrew that hath a fair and comely face,
Proves no decay in nature, but in grace.
If nature do decay in any part,
I wish it in the tongue, not in the heart.

Lords Court of Conscience.

O let the tongue decay of my fair Bride,
That the more love may in the heart abide.
Dear heart regard me, and the cause remove,
That hinders the conjunction of our love.
O let it not be said, that thou hast bin
One that did move thy husband for to sin,
One that did move me to impatiency,
And add affliction unto misery.
If you do know wherein I do offend,
Tell me my fault, and I will quickly mend.
And why shouldst thou not deale as well by mee,
Since all good women labour to be free
From all occasions that may make them ill,
Nor do they ever strive to have their will,
Because they know the husband is the head,
Which all confesse, but such as are ill bred.
And such who must to shame and ruine run,
As to my knowledge some of them have done.
O if in thee remain true woman-hood!
Then take advise by this my counsell good:
And do not think that thou the power canst have,
To make thy bosome friend to be thy slave.
For though I scorn o're thee to tyrannize,
Because I fear the Lord that rules the skies,
Yet I will ever bear my fathers minde,
I scorn as much to stoop to women kinde;
For if I should, then all men would me hate,
Because from manhood I degenerate.

..Lover's Court of Conscience..

And surely I should have the love of no man,
If I were such a slave unto a woman:
Which to prevent, and to avoid ill speeches,
I'll look that thou shalt never wear the bitter
Gall was cast out from some sacrifice
To shew no strife 'twixt man and wife should be
All bitter anger must be banished
From married folk, and from the marriage bed
Cast out this gall, sweeten what's bitter made;
Call it poison, in that long from thee hath strayed
Examine well thy self, and thou shalt finde
How thou hast wronged me by being unkind
It is reported that there is a stone
Which if to be it in the fire be thrown,
That heat it doth receive, it will retain,
And never after will be cold again.
I am that stone, and thou the fire set;
Such heat at first to me thou dost impart,
That my affection never will be cold,
Though we should live till both of us were old
Nay, though old time should crop thy beauty
And in thy cheeks deep wrinkles should appear
Yea, though I say thy beauty fair should fall,
Thy red rose cheeks by want of blood look pale
Yea though I could not give, nor thou receive
Those comforts which we being young may have
Yet I would love thee then, as I do now.
And thou mayst live to see my saying true.

Love's Labor's Lost

There is an hearb as *Aristotle* saith,
That cures and kills, such properties it hath:
Even so it lyeth in a womans will,
By kinde or unkinde words, to cure or kill.
Look on the female creatures, beasts or fowle,
Which of the do their mates crosse or controule?
O cast thine eye upon the turtle Dove,
Why should that bird out-strip thee in thy love?
Is woman warf then is the fenciblest creature,
That's onely guided by the light of nature?
Woman out-strip them all for excellency,
And should out-strip them for obedience.
It is I say the glory of your sex,
To love and to obey, and not to vex.
Your husbands by ill language, is unkind,
And these that do so, want both grace and mind.
Rule batty tongue, my love shall never sever,
For where I lov'd at first, I love for ever.

For ignorant of divine and humane graces,
Women grow mankinde men esteem
And the world turned upside down by late;
I see Husbands then keep at home and spin,
And send his wife to wars while he hath bin;
It women fight themselves that they be able,
Men shall feed Chickens underneath the table;
A way is provided if they be to warre,
They shall not lose what men to labour.



O cast mine eye upon the turtle Dove

O God is the God of order, and each creature
 Formed by him in its proper nature
 The Sun, the Moon, the Sea keepeth their bound,
 The tide observes an order on the Downs;
 Only, polluted men and women, they
 More then all other creatures run astray;
 Can I obedience to my Maker show,
 That no good will unto my neighbour owe?
 Can God obedience then from you expect;
 If you your husbands counsellors reject?
 If we like children do not know our places,
 But ignorant of divine and humane graces?
 Women grow mankind, men effeminate,
 And the world turned upside down by fate:
 Let *Hercules* then keep at home and spin,
 And send his wife to wars where he hath bin.
 If women finde themselves that they be able,
 Men shall feed Chickens underneath the table:
 Always provided if they go to warre,
 They shall not lose what men so labour for,

Leues Court of Conscience.

Or basely yeeld that castle of defence,
Where Chastity hath her chiefe residence.
Admits no entrance unto any man,
But the right owner, such a woman can
Behave her selfe most bravely in the warre,
Without receiving any private harme,
Obnoxious to her reputation.
To bring her husband forth out of fashion;
O such a woman's worth her weight in gold,
If it were so that she were to be sold.
But I had rather thou should'st stay at home,
Then with such *Adversaries* abroad to reame,
And wisely learn, if thou to fight be prone,
To fight against thine owne corruption.
O happy conquest, if thou conquer those,
Thy strong temptation, home-bred in-bred foes.
More lasting glory thou shalt gain hereby,
Then bravest Champions by their chivalry.

The end.

Ten Court of Conscience.
 Or partly wouldst that castle of desire,
 Where Chastity hath her chaste residence,
 Admit no entrance unto any man,
 But the right owner, such a woman can
 Behave her selfe most bravely in the way,
 Without receiving any privy
 Oppression.



To bring in
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 in gold

The end.

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